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ABSTRACT

This postsecondary-level textbook prepares the student for a career in interpretation, defined as the translation of historic, cultural, or natural phenomena to increase audience understanding and enjoyment. The mission of interpretation consists of developing an informed and experienced citizenry in our natural and cultural heritage. The term encompasses activities of nature guides, curators, public education personnel, and rangers. Interpreters are used extensively in leisure and recreational activities by national parks, museums, historic sites, and industry exhibits. This book concerns the principles, philosophies, and practices of the rapidly growing profession of interpretation. Section 1 discusses what interpretation is and who offers it. Section 2 covers the values of interpretation to people and society, management, and clients. Section 3 has 9 chapters on how to interpret, presenting material on traditions, principles, and challenges; how people learn; interpreting to the masses; the printed word; exhibits and museums; self-guiding, nonpersonal interpretation; performance interpretation; historical interpretation; and arts in interpretation. Section 4 discusses the management of interpretation, covering interpretive planning, the business of interpretation, making it pay, personnel and training, evaluation, and the legacy and growth of interpretation as a profession. Three appendices list associations and study centers specializing in interpretation, periodicals for interpretive information, and acknowledgments. (Contains references, photographs, and an index.) (TD)

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